



# **COLUMBIA RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

**Government Management, Accountability & Performance  
October 25, 2006**

**Presented by the Columbia River Implementation Team**



## Why did the Legislature direct Ecology to manage Columbia River water resources more actively?

A history of increasing competition for the Columbia River's water:

- 1980 Instream Flow Rule
- 1993 Ecology Moratorium on issuing new water rights
- 1997 Legislative action to lift moratorium. Governor Locke directs Ecology not to issue new rights until instream needs are understood.
- 2001 Petitions for rulemaking from environmentalists and water users. Increasing litigation.



## What direction did the Legislature provide in the 2006 Session?

House Bill 2860 enacted: Water Resource Management in the Columbia River Basin

- Ecology to “aggressively pursue” the development of new water supplies for instream and out-of-stream uses.
- Clear mitigation standards established and streamlined consultation process for issuing new water rights from the Columbia.
- Data collection and reporting required.
- Role of local decision-makers recognized.
- Voluntary Regional Agreements.



What resources were provided to implement this new mission?

**Operating Budget:**

- \$2 million General Fund-State and 15 FTEs appropriated.

**Capital Budget:**

- \$200 million dollar bond authorization over 10 years.
  - One-third to pursue water conservation.
  - Two-thirds to develop water storage.
- \$26 million dollar appropriation in the current biennium.
  - Provisions prioritized work in the Odessa sub-area,
  - the Walla Walla River basin, and
  - the Yakima River basin.



## What is Ecology expected to do next?

- In short:
  - “...aggressively pursue the development of new water supplies...”,
  - Protect water instream for fish, and
  - Issue new water rights for out-of-stream uses.
- So how do we accomplish this goal?
  - Identify, evaluate, and construct additional **storage**
  - Identify and install **conservation** projects that deliver real water to the mainstem of the Columbia
  - Deliver surface water to the **Odessa** sub-area
  - Eliminate **interruptibility**-risk for mainstem water users
  - Accumulate **water for fish** in trust



## Implementing the Legislation

### Step 1: Creating the Implementation Team

Members drawn from Ecology Headquarters, Central Regional Office  
and Eastern Regional Office

**AND**

the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife,  
the Conservation Commission, and the Attorney General's Office

Tom Tebb, Keith Stoffel, Derek Sandison, Dan Haller, Ken Slattery, Guy Gregory, Gerry O'Keefe, Barbara Markham and Alan Reichman (AGO), Teresa Scott and Bob Barwin (WDFW), Jon Culp (CC), Tim Hill, Joye Redfield-Wilder, Doug Johnson, Bob Barwin, Tom Laurie, Anne Knapp, Elizabeth McManus (Ross & Associates), Joe Stohr



## Implementing the Legislation

### Step 2: Orienting to Potential Sources of Water

- Lake Roosevelt Drawdown (Agreement in Principle with the Colville Tribes)
- The Potholes Reservoir and other Columbia Basin Project Options (Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Columbia Basin Project Irrigation Districts)
- Conservation (Project Inventory)
- Storage (Evaluations, pending and currently underway)
- Canada?



## Implementing the Legislation: Step 3: Preparing a 12 month Workplan

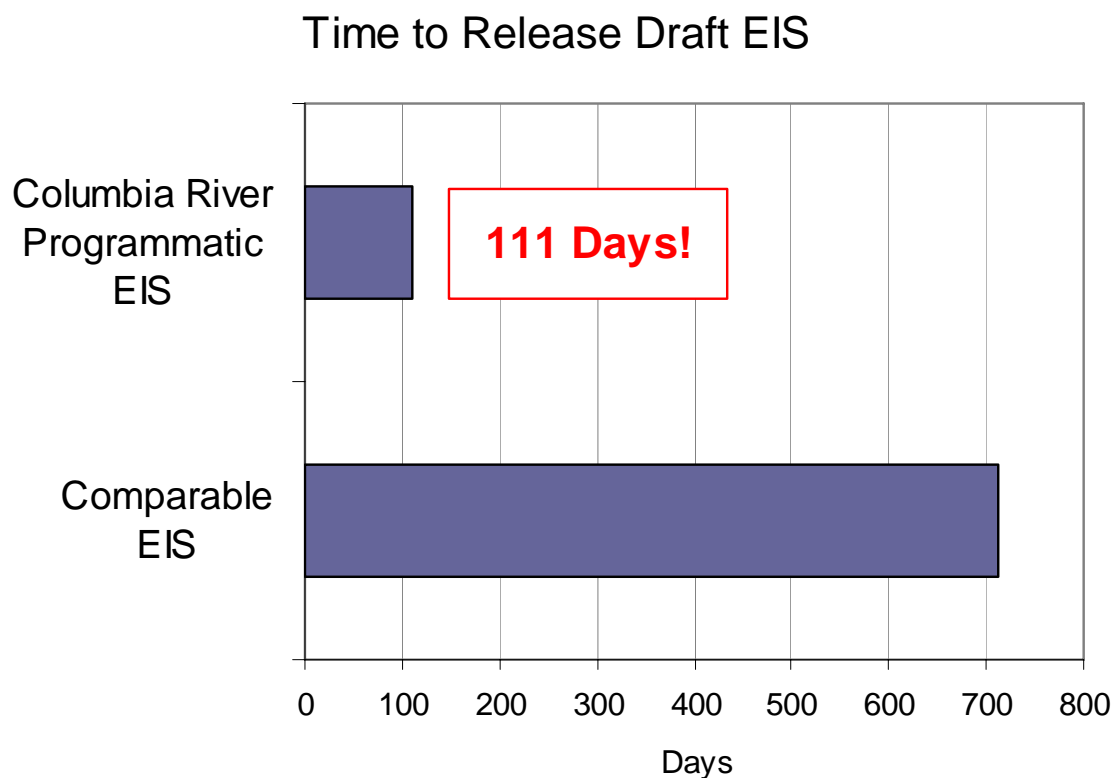
### Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

- ✓ Jump-Start Hiring Process
- ✓ Assessing impacts of Lake Roosevelt drawdown with Colville Tribes
- ✓ Reclamation & Columbia Basin Irrigation Districts Memorandum of Understanding
- ✓ Supporting ongoing studies
- ✓ Legislative reports
- ✓ Voluntary Regional Agreement public processes
- ✓ Strategic data system plan and implementation
- ✓ Ongoing Communication and Outreach & Planning





## Implementing the Legislation: Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement



- Purpose is to present the major actions and consequences of implementing 90.90 RCW (Columbia River Basin Water Supply)
- Major program components include: storage, conservation, Voluntary Regional Agreements, and policy choices necessary to implement the law.
- Adoption of Final EIS scheduled for February 15, 2007.



## Implementing the Legislation: Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

### **EIS Policy choices include:**

- How will storage projects be selected for evaluation?
- What mechanism will be used to calculate net water savings from conservation?
- What are the funding criteria for water supply projects?
- Definitions of “acquisition” and “transfer”
- Are new water rights subject to the Columbia River Instream Flow Rule?
- What is the process to initiate and evaluate Voluntary Regional Agreements (VRAs)?
- What is the definition of “no negative impact” to instream flows on the Columbia and Snake rivers?
- What is the definition of the one-mile zone for data collection and planning?
- How will Ecology account for mitigation and water issued in new rights?
- How will Ecology manage VRA and non-VRA water right processing?
- How will projects associated with a VRA be funded?
- Are exempt wells included in the water use data system?



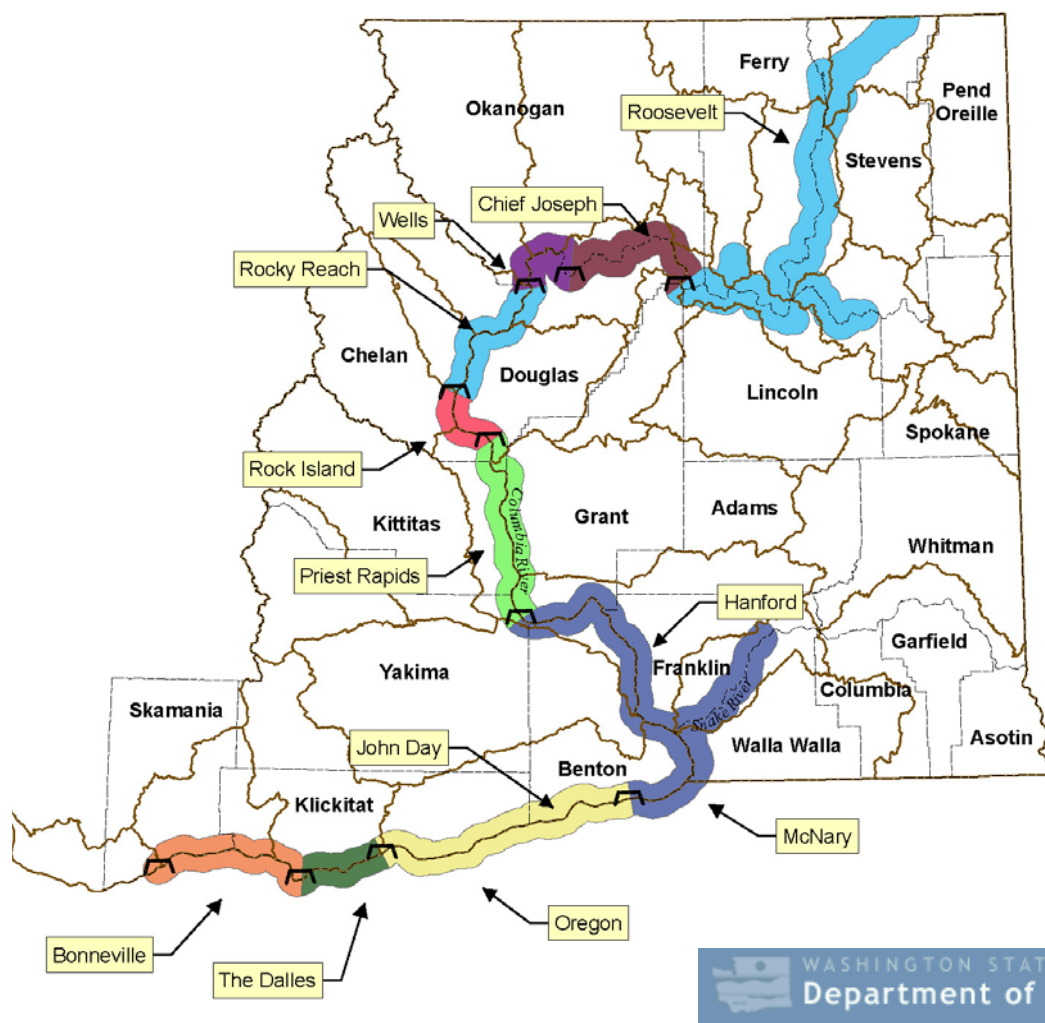
## Implementing the Legislation: Jump-Start Hiring Process

- Purpose: Begin personnel planning and hiring processes before July 1 to fill new positions as quickly as possible.
- 15 FTEs provided by the legislature.
- **3.5 Months after effective date of 90.90 RCW....** 11 positions filled, including: Columbia River Coordinator; Columbia River unit manager; communication specialist; graphics designer/support staff; 5 water right mappers; an Environmental Specialist (permit writer); and, an Environmental Planner (environmental review and projects).



## Mapping Existing Rights

### Quick Hiring Supports Progress Toward The Goal





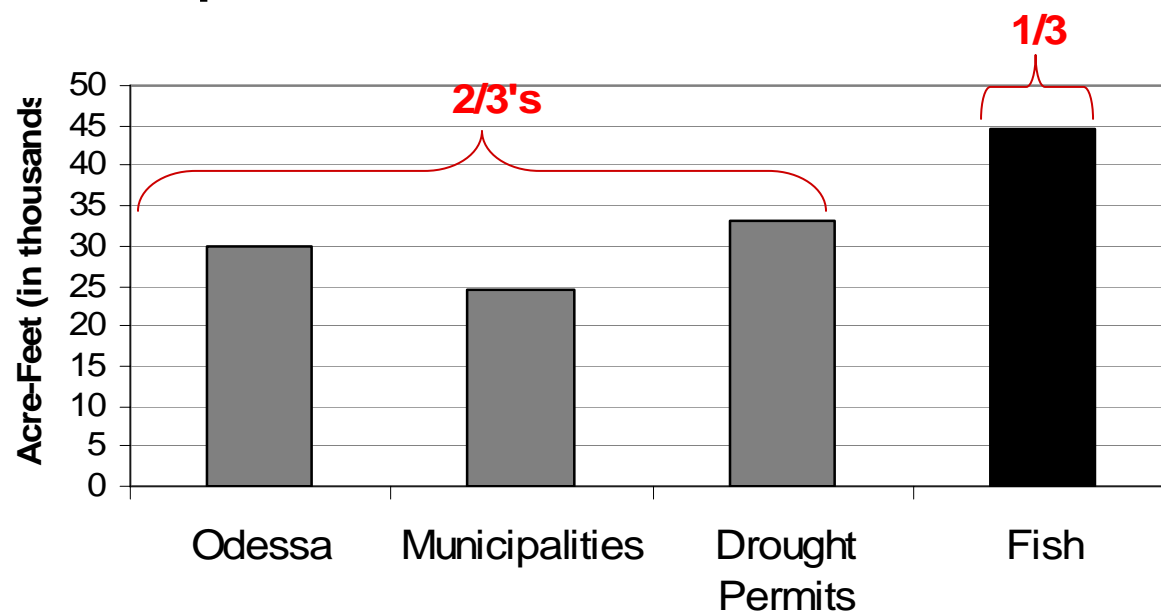
## Implementing the Legislation: The Agreement in Principle with the Colville Tribes

- Currently assessing impacts of a Lake Roosevelt drawdown ranging between 82,000 acre-feet (non-drought years) and 132,000 acre-feet (drought years).
- Agreement in Principle requires Ecology to fund assessments of potential impacts to electricity generation revenue, archeological resources, recreation, ferry service, and resident fisheries.
- In return for Tribal support, State tentatively agreed to provide:
  - \$200,000 per year to support ongoing water resources planning and evaluation work.
  - Between \$2 and \$3 million per year for a Colville Reservation economic development fund.
  - \$500,000 per year for resident fisheries enhancement actions.
  - Funding for environmental and human health risk assessments of contamination in the Similkameen River.
  - Full mitigation for any impacts associated with the drawdown



## Beneficiaries of the Colville Agreement in Principle

### Proposed Uses of Lake Roosevelt Water



- Two-thirds of water acquired under the terms of the Agreement in Principle would be used to mitigate for the issuance of new water permits.
- One-third of the water would be retained instream to benefit fish.





## Current Status of the Colville Agreement in Principle

- Assessments of potential impacts to cultural resources, recreation, resident fisheries, ferry service, power revenue currently underway.
- Assessment work expected to be complete by June 30, 2007.
- Extension of the Agreement in Principle between the State and the Colville Tribes is being coordinated with the Governor's Office. Date pending.
- Negotiation of a formal Memorandum of Understanding will commence following the completion of the assessment work.



## Implementing the Legislation: The Memorandum of Understanding with U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Columbia Basin Project Irrigation Districts

- Purpose is to “...secure economic and environmental benefits from improved water management both within the federal project and along the mainstem of the Columbia River...”
- Highlights of the Memorandum of Understanding Include:
  - Studies of additional **water storage** from the Columbia River, delivery of water to the Odessa sub-area, and state and irrigation district support for federal actions necessary to achieve these objectives.
  - Execution of a **drought relief contract** to provide water to interruptible water users adjacent to the Columbia River, including additional **water for fish**.
  - Execution of **municipal water service contracts**, including additional **water for fish**.
  - Ecology to issue a secondary use permit for uses in the **Odessa sub-area**, including additional **water for fish**.
  - Assessment of the feasibility of revised management of the **Potholes Reservoir** to provide additional on-project storage capacity.
  - **Consultation with Colvilles/Spokanes** regarding access to water from Lake Roosevelt.





## Implementing the Legislation: Water Supply & Demand, and Project Inventory Reports to the Legislature

### An Aggressive Schedule

- July 1<sup>st</sup> – Effective date of legislation
- July 15<sup>th</sup> – Contract executed with consultants
  - Lead = Golder Associates (with Montgomery Water Group & Adolfson)
  - Support from the Conservation Commission and the Washington State University
- September 1<sup>st</sup> – Draft Inventory and Forecast to Golder
- October 2<sup>nd</sup> – Draft Report to Ecology
- October 16<sup>th</sup> – Draft Report to Public
- October 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> – Open Houses / Workshops
- November 15<sup>th</sup> – Final Report to Legislature



## Implementing the Legislation: Processing the Columbia Snake River Irrigators Association Voluntary Regional Agreement

### Synchronizing the Voluntary Regional Agreement

- October 16<sup>th</sup> – Consultation with federal, local, and tribal governments initiated.
  - Heavy commitment of senior staff to tribal and federal consultations
- December 15<sup>th</sup> – Consultation period closes
- December 16<sup>th</sup> – Necessary adjustments to the Voluntary Regional Agreement negotiated with the Columbia Snake River Irrigators Association
- January 2<sup>nd</sup> – 30 Day public review period opened. Revised Voluntary Regional Agreement and consultation comments posted for review and comment.
- January 31<sup>st</sup> – Public review period closes.
- February 1<sup>st</sup> – Adjustments negotiated with Columbia Snake River Irrigators
- February 15<sup>th</sup> – Voluntary Regional Agreement executed





## Implementing the Legislation: What will we see in the data?

### Factors Affecting Long-Term Water Supply and Demand

- Population and Economic Growth
- Agricultural Demand – Global Markets
- Meeting Fisheries Objectives – Flow and Temperature
- Continuing to Meet Needs in the Odessa
- Other Jurisdictions – Water Uses by Other States, Canada, and Tribes
- Climate changes
- Value of hydropower to “firm” other renewable energy sources



## Implementing the Legislation: What will an integrated water supply strategy include?

- Diversified supply portfolio
- Integrated management of ground and surface water supplies
- Broader regional coordination of supply development and demand management
- Sophisticated seasonal, annual, and permanent water marketing
- Robust protection of instream values consistent with science
- Fully transparent data systems and water management decision-making processes



## Implementing the Legislation: Communications and Outreach

- Policy Advisory Group
- Technical Advisory Group
- County Commissioners Advisory Group
- Columbia River Website
- Automated E-mail – nearly 400 subscribers
- Presentations in Washington and Pacific NW Region
- Watershed Planning Units & Leads
- Irrigation and Conservation Districts
- Conservation Commission and WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
- Public Notice and Public Workshops
- Formal Consultations
- Media



## Step 4: Evaluating Lessons Learned

- Jump Start worked
- Central & Eastern Regional Offices, Water Resources and state agency partners get it done
- There's never too much capacity to communicate – internally or externally
- Money attracts attention – lot's of attention
- Improved transparency in water resources decision-making pleases many constituencies
- Pent up demand for pragmatic relationships across interest-based lines
- Hope is a powerful force



## Some Coming Steps: the Challenges of Managing Water

- Successfully concluding the Colville Tribes Agreement in Principle for Lake Roosevelt Water
- Time pressure in the Odessa
- Investments in water use efficiency may not contribute significantly to Columbia River water supplies
- Sources of supply with limited lifespans vs. perpetual water rights
- Small storage vs. big storage ... What information will we have when its time to decide?





## More Challenges:

- Securing support from other states for water supply development
- Ongoing Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion litigation
- Source substitution – does it make sense to trade off Columbia water/fish for Tributary water/fish
- Risk Management



## Measuring the Performance of the Columbia River Water Resources Management Program

- Volume (in acre-feet) of conserved water developed for reallocation
- Volume (in acre-feet) of storage water developed
- On-time delivery of environmental reviews, studies, and other work products
- Acres of land in the Odessa sub-area receiving surface water from the Columbia Basin Project
- Number of water rights (new or supplemental drought permits) issued by the Department of Ecology